

CITY OF LAFAYETTE

W E T W E A T H E R P R O G R A M

Stormwater Capital Improvement Program and User Fee

Q: What is stormwater quality and why is it important to our community?

A: When rain or snow falls in Lafayette, the precipitation runs off impervious surfaces such as roofs, driveways, streets and parking lots into the stormwater drainage system. The stormwater, which may be polluted with chemicals, litter, and sediment, flows from the storm sewer directly into local streams and rivers. With little or no treatment, polluted stormwater creates unhealthy conditions for human and aquatic life.



Q: What state and federal regulations promote clean water?

A: Stormwater entering and exiting the city's storm sewers is regulated by the federal Clean Water Act and the Indiana's General Storm Water Permit Rule (Rule 13). In 1999 under Rule 13, Lafayette was issued a joint National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit as a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The NPDES permit exists to establish a program for stormwater quality so that public health, existing water uses and aquatic life are protected. The city shares its permit with Dayton, Battle Ground, Ivy Tech College, Purdue University, West Lafayette and Tippecanoe County.

Stormwater Quality Impacts Humans and Aquatic Life




Q: How are the NPDES requirements funded?

A: While the city currently operates a stormwater program, a dedicated funding source does not exist. In the past, permit mandates as well as ongoing operational and maintenance activities of the storm sewer system were funded by the Department of Water Pollution Control. Sanitary sewer users bore the burden for stormwater system improvements, which benefit all properties in the community, whether they are served by the storm sewer or not.

In 2010 and forward, 100 percent of Water Pollution Control revenue will be required

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to fund the city's mandated \$179 million Combined Sewer Overflow Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) to reduce raw sewage overflows into the Wabash River and other local waterways and ongoing operations and maintenance needs. The department does not have adequate funds to finance both the LTCP and stormwater programs.

Capital Program to Benefit Entire City

Q: What is the city's plan to fund the stormwater program?

A: To meet NPDES Permit requirements, avoid costly fines, and complete drainage improvements the City of Lafayette proposes establishing a dedicated stormwater revenue source in 2010. Stormwater runoff from properties—residential and non-residential—enters the city's storm sewers. A user fee would allow the city to fund drainage and stormwater quality improvements throughout the community.

Q: What stormwater needs will the proposed user fee address?

A: In addition to NPDES permit requirements, the stormwater user fee will address necessary stormwater system improvements, expansion and drainage improvements. The user fee would fund the following high priority projects identified in the Stormwater Capital Program:

- Valley Street Drainage Improvements
- Elliott Ditch Stream Bank Restoration
- Southside/30th Street Drainage Improvements
- Rain Gardens & Rain Barrel Program
- Armstrong Park Detention Basin Retrofit
- Durkees Run East Improvements
- Vinton Woods Detention Pond Rehabilitation
- Orchard Heights Drainage Improvements
- Outfall Repairs

Proposed User Fee to Fund Improvements

Q: Who will the proposed user fee affect? How much will it cost?

A: If approved by the Lafayette Common Council, the city would implement a stormwater user fee for developed residential and non-residential property owners.

- Proposed Residential User Fee: Developed residential property owners would be assessed a flat \$5 monthly user fee based on the average impervious surface for the average residential parcel size, or an Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU). One ERU equals 3,200 square feet.
- Proposed Non-Residential User Fee: For developed non-residential property owners, the city would calculate user fees based on actual measured impervious surface for a parcel. The minimum bill will be one ERU.

The stormwater program is a service that benefits all properties contributing stormwater to the sewer conveyance system, so all property owners, tax exempt or not, will be assessed a fee. An appeals process exists for those questioning the city's user fee calculations.

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Community Members Provided Input

Q: How will the proposed user fee be collected?

A: The Stormwater Utility will function as part of the Water Pollution Control Department, and the city proposes sending stormwater user fee statements in 2010. Statements and accounts will be processed by the city Utility Billing Office. Statements are planned to be issued in advance of two six-month periods of service.

Q: What members of the public helped to develop the proposed user fee?

A: In March 2009, 17 community members were invited by Mayor Roswarski to participate on the City's Stormwater Technical Advisory Committee. Members represent Lafayette neighborhoods, industry and commercial business, property development, religious groups and local government. The committee meets monthly to discuss the city's progress and offer input on stormwater user fee development and the capital improvement program. Members, ultimately, will assist in formulating a user fee recommendation for consideration by the Lafayette Common Council.

How You Can Help

Q: How can a resident or business get more information about the proposed user fee?

A: Information including the user fee calculations, examples of a statement, and capital project information is available at www.city.lafayette.in.us in the Wet Weather Program section. The public also is welcome to attend the September 14 Common Council meeting for a reading of the revised stormwater and municipal code, which outlines the proposed user fee. The council will discuss the ordinance and accept input from residents and businesses. The Common Council will vote on the revised stormwater code at the October 5 meeting.

Q: How can a resident or business play a part in improving stormwater quality?

A: Follow these simple tips to keep local waterways clean:

- Healthy lawns only need one inch of water per week. Water as needed during the cool times of the day, and prevent water from flowing into a storm drain.
- Use insecticides, herbicides and fertilizers appropriately. Review the instructions for proper use before applying these chemicals to your lawn or garden.
- Reduce impervious surfaces, or paved areas, on your property, and increase the amount of vegetated area in your yard.
- Clean up your pet's waste. It can end up in our waterways.
- Wash your car at a car wash instead of cleaning it in your driveway.
- Consider innovative approaches to stormwater management, such as using rain barrels, planting rain gardens or installing green roofs.
- Clear trash and debris from storm drains and driveway pipes to prevent clogs, and dispose of the trash properly.
- Dispose of paint, motor oil and cleaning products properly. Contact the Lafayette Sanitation Department at 765-807-1411 or visit the sanitation page of www.city.lafayette.in.us for more information.
- Report drainage problems and illegal dumping to the City of Lafayette; call 765-807-1050.
- Learn more about stormwater programs and permitting by visiting the Indiana Department of Environmental Management Web site, www.in.gov/idem.

